

YOU AND THE MEDIA

A few useful tips to keep in mind *when communicating with the media:*

Keep it Simple!

- ✓ Be conversational and speak at the level of a 9th grader
- ✓ Use clear, everyday terms and analogies (no jargon!)
- ✓ Maintain good eye contact, voice projection, and helpful hand gestures
- ✓ Keep your answers brief and allow the journalist to interrupt you
- ✓ Be enthusiastic about your work and convey why your research is meaningful to you

Be Prepared!

- ✓ Respect the reporter's deadline by promptly returning calls/emails
- ✓ Have 2-3 key points ready to communicate
- ✓ Never conceal anything! Prepare answers to tough questions or direct the reporter to the PR officer of your institution
- ✓ Provide graphics, good quotes and a compelling story to the reporter
- ✓ If led outside of your line of expertise during the interview, redirect the reporter back to the main points of your research

Follow Up!

- ✓ Offer to do an accuracy check
- ✓ Be available for follow-up questions
- ✓ Offer a polite correction to the journalist if a story contained a mistake
- ✓ Provide background material (especially at press conferences)
- ✓ A compliment never hurts; if you like the story, tell the reporter (or, even better; his/her editor)

Adapted From Herbert O. Funsten • Revised by Nyasha Dunkley